



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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TRAINING ‘OPEN FOR BUSINESS’ AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Wednesday, May 13, 2020) – With a steady rain falling at 5:29 a.m. (all times Eastern), Churchill Downs’ outrider **Lee Lockwood** spoke on the track radio with the words so many people have been anticipating, “We are open for business. Gap Attendants, you can open the track.”

And, a few seconds later, training resumed at Churchill Downs for the first time in more than five months. The first horse on the racetrack was Kentucky Derby (Grade I) contender **Major Fed** for trainer **Greg Foley**, who arrived from Fair Grounds on Monday. Several other horses were out early Wednesday morning from trainers **Steve Asmussen, Jimmy Baker, Phil Bauer, Buff Bradley, Bret Calhoun, Mark Casse, Brad Cox, Neil Howard, Michelle Lovell** and **Dallas Stewart**.

“It’s a relief to be home,” said Lovell, who lives a stone’s throw away from the Churchill Downs backside but has traveled the last six weeks to Lexington’s **Ashbrook Farm** where she moved her horses from Fair Grounds. “It was tough traveling back and forth every day to Lexington but we got through it and can see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

Like many trainers, Lovell has gone through some financial hardships without racing in Kentucky for nearly six weeks. The former jockey has two horses entered for Saturday’s opening day program: **Nice of Me** (Race 3) and **Miss Bigly** (Race 4).

“It’s been tough on us all but we are so thankful racing is back at Churchill Downs,” Lovell said.

Horses from Florida began to arrive Wednesday at Churchill Downs and as of 11 a.m. there were more than 500 horses on the grounds. The phased-shipping process will continue through next week.

First post for opening day on Saturday is 1 p.m. and among the highlights of the card will be the return of champion **Monomoy Girl** in Race 4 (2:32 p.m.). The Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) and Breeders’ Cup Distaff (GI) hero was among 14 horses that arrived Tuesday for Cox. Among the other horses arriving for Cox were stakes winners **Dot Matrix** and **Factor This**.

Other top horses currently based on the grounds include likely \$500,000 Stephen Foster (GII) contender **By My Standards**, multiple graded stakes winner **Spiced Perfection** and potential future star **Volatile**, who earned a stout 120 Brisnet Speed Rating for his sizzling 7 ½-length allowance win on April 24 at Oaklawn where he stopped the clock in 1:08.48 for six furlongs.

Training hours through Friday will be 5:30–9 a.m. with a renovation break at 7 a.m. On Saturday, training will switch to 5:30–10 a.m. with two renovation breaks at 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Weather permitting, turf training will be on Sundays and Tuesdays. Gate schooling will operate 7:30-9:30 a.m. (except Tuesdays).

TRAINERS FILL ENTRY BOX WITH 171 HORSES FOR SUNDAY’S 11-RACE PROGRAM – Sunday’s 11-race card will feature an astounding average field size of 11.9 horses with only one race not oversubscribing (Race 8, 11 entrants). There are 103 different trainers with horses entered and 49 jockeys scheduled to ride on the program.

The featured race of the afternoon will be Race 10, a conditioned-allowance race for 3-year-olds sprinting 5 ½ furlongs on the Matt Winn Turf Course worth a purse of \$84,000. The race will display a rematch of the top two finishers from the \$1 million Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint: **Breeze Easy’s Four Wheel Drive** (post 1, jockey Irad Ortiz Jr., trainer Wesley Ward); and **Three Diamonds Farm’s Chimney Rock** (post 11, Jose Ortiz, Mike Maker).

The field also includes **Tamaroak Partners’** \$75,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes winner **Bango** (post 7, Rafael Bejarano, Greg Foley); and **Marcus Yagour’s** multiple stakes-winning Ohio-bred **Betchaiwill** (post 12, John McKee, James Chapman).

Also featured on the program is a first-level allowance event for 3-year-olds at seven furlongs. The overflow field of 12 horses with one also eligible was carded as Race 9 and includes: **Stoneleigh Farm’s** Animal Kingdom Stakes runner-up **My Man Flintstone** (post 3, Julien Leparoux, Kenny McPeck); **Rockingham Ranch’s** \$2 million Breeders’ Cup Juvenile third-place finisher **Wrecking Crew** (post 8, Jose Ortiz, Peter Miller); and **Juddmonte Farms’** \$250,000 Holy Bull (GIII) third-place runner **Toledo** (post 9, Javier Castellano, Chad Brown).

The overnight for Saturday and Sunday’s cards will be posted here: <https://www.churchilldowns.com/horsemen/racing/overnights/>. First post will be 1 p.m.

WAGERING MENU – Full fields and large wagering pools are anticipated for the start of the Churchill Downs Spring Meet. Included daily will be at least two 50-cent Pick 5s, three 50-cent Pick 4s and the return of the 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot.

Each day's program will begin with the low takeout 50-cent Pick 5 (Races 1-5). The early Pick 4 will span Races 2-5 while the 15-percent takeout Single 6 Jackpot is scheduled daily on the final six races. On 11-race programs, the middle Pick 5 will begin in Race 4 while the middle Pick 4 will start in Race 5. The late Pick 5 will span races 7-11 and the late Pick 4 will cover Races 8-11.

On 10-race programs, the Late Pick 5 will start in Race 6 and the Late Pick 4 will begin in Race 7. Any nine-race programs will have the Late Pick 5 start in Race 5 and Late Pick 4 in Race 6.

Win, Place, Show, Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Daily Double and Pick 3 wagers will be offered every race (on all races that qualify under Kentucky statutes for minimum field size) and the \$1 Super Hi-5 will once again be offered in the last race.

For more information, visit www.churchilldowns.com/wagering.

STAKES NOMINATIONS – The Saturday, May 23 card at Churchill Downs is highlighted by five stakes for Stephen Foster Preview Day led by the \$150,000 Matt Winn (Grade III) worth 50-20-10-5 points to the Top 4 finishers on the Road to the Kentucky Derby. Other stakes on the card are the \$100,000 Blame (4-year-olds and up at one-mile); \$100,000 War Chant (3-year-olds at one-mile on turf); \$100,000 Tepin (3-year-old fillies at one-mile on turf); and \$100,000 Shawnee (fillies and mares at 1 1/16 miles).

The nominations list for each of the five stakes can be viewed here: <https://www.churchilldowns.com/horsemen/stakes/nominations/>

INSIDE CHURCHILL DOWNS RETURNS FRIDAY ON ESPN LOUISVILLE – “Inside Churchill Downs” will make its long-awaited return to the airwaves on Friday at 6 p.m. on ESPN 680/105.7.

Churchill Downs' **Darren Rogers** and **Kevin Kerstein** along with BetAmerica and TwinSpires.com's **Scott Shapiro** will host the one-hour program that features interviews and handicapping information with jockeys, trainers and industry experts. Those outside the Louisville area can listen live on www.espnloouisville.com.

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